

THE  
**A P O L O G I E**  
 OF  
**John Ketch Esq;**  
 THE  
 EXECUTIONER of L O N D O N,  
 IN  
**VINDICATION**  
 Of himself as to the Execution of the  
**Late Lord RUSSEL,**

On *July 21.* 1683.



IT is an Old saying and a true one, that one story's good till another's heard, but it is one of the most difficult things imaginable to dispossess the World of any censure or prejudice, that is once fixt or hath taken Root in the Harts of the People. However since it is not fit that so Publick a Person as the Executioner of Justice and the Law's; Sentence upon Criminals and Malefactors should lye under the scandal of untrue Reports, and be unjustly Expos'd to popular Clamour, I thought it a matter of highest importance to me to clear and Vindicate my self as to the manner of my Lord *Russel's* Execution, and the hard usage he is said to have had in the Severing of his Head from his Body.

As to the several reports that have been rais'd, as it hath been always a common Custom in the World, not only to magnifie and misrepresent the truth, but to forgo things that never were, the  
 falsity

falsity of them will appear to judicious Persons as well by the Improbability of them, as by the testimony of those that know the Contrary: As namely that I had been drinking all the forenoon, and was in Drink when I came upon the Scaffold: when all my Neighbours can testify that I went Orderly to Bed that Night, and wholly undisguis'd in Drink. That I had 20. *Guenies* the Night before, That after the First blow my Lord should say you Dog, did I give you 10. *Guenies* to use me so Inhumanly? 'Tis true I receav'd 10. *Guenies* but not till after having dispos'd of his Coat, Hat, and Perriwig; I took the boldness to give him a small remembrance of the Civilities customary on the like occasion, as to the report of my striking my Lord into the Shoulder, how false it is, I appeal to those that were the nearest Spectatours of the Execution, and for my being committed Prisoner to *Newgate*, it is so Easie a matter to disprove the truth thereof, that I need not trouble myself any farther about it.

But my grand business is to acquit my self and come off as fairly as I can, as to those Grievous Obloquies and Invectives that have been, thrown upon me for not Seizing my Lord's Head from his Body at one Blow, and indeed had I given my Lord more Blows then one, but of design to put him to more then Ordinary Pain, as I have been Taxt I might justly be exclaim'd on as Guilty of greater Inhumanity then can be imputed even to one of my Profession, or had it been occasioned by a Bungling and Supine Negligence, I had been much to blame. But there are Circumstances enow to clear me in this particular, and to make it plainly appear that my Lord himself was the real obstrack that he had not a quicker dispatch out of this World; since if I may Speak it of a Person of his Quality? He died with more Galantry then Discretion, and did not dispose him for recieving of the fatal Stroke in such a posture as was most sutable, for where as he should have put his hands before his Breast, or else behind him, he spread them out before him, nor would he be perswaded to give any signat or pull his Cap over his Eyes, which might possibly be the Occasion that Discovering the Blow, he somewhat heav'd his Body. Moreover after having reciev'd the *Guenies*, and according to my duty ask't his Lordships Pardon; I receav'd some Interruption just as I was taking Aim and going to give the Blow. Thus have I truly and faithfully expos'd to the Publick all that can be said in this matter, and hope, what ever prejudice the Undiscerning Multitude may remain to have given sufficient satisfaction to all rational judicious Persons.

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